

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL



MEMORANDUM

September 19, 2013

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TO: Head Women's Lacrosse Coaches and Officials.

FROM: Celine Cunningham, chair
NCAA Women's Lacrosse Rules Committee

Pat Dillon, secretary-rules editor
NCAA Women's Lacrosse Rules Committee.

SUBJECT: 2013 Fall Ball and 2014 & 2015 Rules Changes.

Listed below are some of the rules and editorial changes for the upcoming season. In each instance we have attempted to use wording as it will appear in the 2014 and 2015 NCAA Women's Lacrosse Rules Book. Any explanatory information will be noted in *italics*. All changes will be noted in the 2014 and 2015 NCAA Women's Lacrosse Rules Book that will be available for purchase or online download at www.ncaapublications.com or www.uslacrosse.org.

A short synopsis of the major changes is provided below:

- Maximum length of the goalkeeper stick has increased to 52".
- All game balls must be NOCSAE certified and contain the NOCSAE seal.
- Head coaches must meet with officials with 10 minutes on the pre-game clock. A minor foul may be called if a coach fails to make a timely appearance.
- The official timer (or score table personnel) may sound the horn to indicate a possession timeout during a live-ball or dead-ball situation.
- The number of timeout requests during regulation is increased from two to three per team.
- After a goal, the goal scoring player must drop her stick or hand it to the nearest official. She may not adjust her strings in any way.
- Teams will be allowed a maximum of three stick check requests per game.
- Defensive players may move through any portion of the goal circle. The player directly defending the attack player with the ball is the only defender (other than the goalkeeper) allowed to remain in the goal circle.
- Any foul committed after a goal is scored will now be called and penalized whether a cardable foul or not. Play will restart with a free position at center rather than a draw.

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NCAA MEMORANDUM

September 19, 2013

Page No. 2

Goalkeeper stick (Rule 2): The crosse's overall length shall be a minimum of 35½" and a maximum of 52".

Explanation: The overall maximum length for the goalie's stick will increase from 48" to 52".

Game ball (Rule 2): The game ball must be NOCSAE certified and contain the NOCSAE seal.

Explanation: Because the new NOCSAE balls are still in production and generally not readily available yet this rule will not be enforced during the 2013 fall ball season.

Coach/Umpires meeting (Rule 3): Each head coach and the officials must meet at the scorer's table with 10 minutes showing on the pre-game clock.

Explanation: The change to the word "must" emphasizes the importance of this required meeting. A minor foul may be called if the head coach does not make a timely appearance.

Possession timeout horn (Rule 3): The official timer will sound the horn to indicate a timeout request by the team in possession during a live-ball or dead-ball situation.

Explanation: The coach may request a live-ball possession timeout through the table or through the officials on the field. The official timer or personnel at the scorer's table on the field may sound the horn if the official timer is located in the press box. It is the home team's responsibility to ensure table personnel have a working horn at the table.

Team timeouts (Rule 4): Each team will be permitted three timeouts during regulation time that do not carry over into overtime.

Goal scoring player/crosse (Rule 4): A goal is not scored when the player who scored the goal does not drop her crosse or hand her crosse to the nearest official in a timely fashion. A goal is not scored when the goal scorer or any teammate adjusts the goal-scoring crosse in any way before dropping the crosse or handing it to the official. The crosse will be considered illegal and will be removed from the game.

Explanation: The focus should not be on how quickly the player drops her stick or how quickly she hands the stick to an official. Rather the officials should focus on ensuring that neither the scoring player nor any teammate adjusts the stick in any way. The nearest umpire will take possession of the stick and may perform a discretionary stick check. The umpire should allow reasonable time for the opposing team to request a stick check before returning the stick. It is expected that this new procedure will take place quickly and not delay the restart of play.

If the goal scoring stick is not relinquished in a timely fashion or if it is adjusted in any way or if it is found to be illegal after a stick check is performed, the goal will not count, the stick will be

NCAA MEMORANDUM

September 19, 2013

Page No. 3

removed from the game, and play will restart with a free position at center. Player positioning for the draw will apply.

Stick Check Requests (Rule 5): Each team will be allowed three stick check requests per game. If a stick check is requested and the stick is found to be illegal, the team requesting the stick check will not lose any of their three allowable requests.

Defensive players in the goal circle (Rule 5): Players on the defending team may run through any portion of the goal circle as long as their team is not in possession of the ball. Only one defensive player who is directly marking the ball carrier within a stick's length may remain in the goal circle while defending.

NOTE: Any defender moving through the goal circle must still abide by all provisions of the obstruction of the free space to goal rule.

NOTE: A ball on the ground within the goal circle constitutes possession for the defending team and only the goalkeeper or the deputy may then be in the goal circle and playing the ball.

Explanation: Members of the defending team will be allowed in the goal circle as long as their team is not in possession of the ball. They must still abide by all other provisions of the goal circle rules. For instance, if the goalkeeper is outside the circle with the ball and she wants to return the ball to the circle, she must toss the ball into the circle without having her stick break the plane of the circle.

A defensive goal circle foul will be called if a defensive player remains in the goal circle too long, or remains in the circle when her team loses possession of the ball, or stands in the circle while not marking the player with the ball within a stick's length.

A Q & A section appears at the end of this memo to address specific questions about this rule change.

Foul after a goal (Rule 7): A Note will be added to Rule 7, Section 1 indicating that any foul that is called after a goal has scored will be penalized, whether the foul is a cardable foul, a major foul or a minor foul. Any of these fouls by the defensive team will result in a free position at the center to restart play rather than a draw. Certain fouls by the attacking team, for instance a charge during/immediately after the shot, will result in a no goal call and a free position being awarded to the defending team. Certain minor fouls such as a mouth guard or jewelry violation by the attack will result in a free position at center (See Rule 4, Section 8).

Explanation: Fouls after a goal, other than cardable fouls, were essentially going unpunished. The addition of this Note in Rule 7 will clarify that all fouls are subject to the provisions for penalty administration outlined in Rule 7.

NCAA MEMORANDUM

September 19, 2013

Page No. 4

EXPERIMENTAL RULE – FALL BALL ONLY

A maximum of three players from each team may be between the restraining lines during the draw. All other players must be below either restraining line. Other than the players taking the draw, no player who is between the restraining lines may enter the circle until the whistle blows. No player behind either restraining line may cross the line until possession of the ball is established or the ball has crossed one of the restraining lines.

Explanation: The official setting the draw will be the one to signal possession. She will leave her hand raised when backing away from the center, blow the whistle to start play, and lower/drop her arm when she determines that one player has gained possession or the ball has crossed one of the restraining lines. She may also yell “possession.” Violations will be considered an illegal draw

Possession has been established when the player with the ball can perform any of the normal functions of control such as cradling, carrying, passing or shooting.

The NCAA Women’s Lacrosse Rules Committee has received a number of specific questions regarding the rule change that allows defenders to enter and move through the goal circle:

1. **Question:** How many defenders may be in the goal circle at any one time if they are moving through?
Answer: There is no limit to the number of defenders who may be moving through the circle at the same time. For instance, two players may move through simultaneously if they are double-teaming a player with or without the ball.
2. **Question:** If a defender sends a late slide through the goal circle and is in the way of the shooter, can she still be called for shooting space even if she is inside the circle?
Answer: Yes, all provisions of the shooting space rule still apply. If the player would have been called for shooting space if she was outside the circle and slid late, she will be called for shooting space now even if she is within the goal circle.
3. **Question:** A defender is off ball but wants to go to double a player with the ball on the other side of the circle. She can run through any part of the goal circle to do this, correct?
Answer: Correct.
4. **Question:** If a defender is in the goal circle and legally marking the ball carrier and that attacker passes the ball, does this on-ball defender have to immediately move out of the circle?
Answer: Yes, it is expected that the defender will recognize that her player no longer has the ball and she must leave the goal circle.

NCAA MEMORANDUM

September 19, 2013

Page No. 5

5. **Question:** Is there a time limit for how long a defender can be in the goal circle?

Answer: If the defender is in the goal circle and is legally marking the player with the ball, she may remain there with no time limit as long as she maintains a position within a stick's length of the player with the ball. Any other defender will be expected to move through the circle quickly and may not remain there.

6. **Question:** Will a defender's 3-second count "stop" when they enter the goal circle?

Answer: Yes, if they leave the 8m arc and move through the goal circle. Example one: An off ball defender is standing in the middle of the 8m arc and realizes she must exit the arc or be called for 3 seconds. She steps into the goal circle and then back out into the 8m arc. This defender would be called for a 3-second violation. Example two: The same defender realizes she must leave the arc and chooses to enter the front of the goal circle and exit out the side of the circle so she is no longer in the 8m arc. This defender has met the provisions of the 3-second rule and would not be called for a foul.

7. **Question:** If a team is in a backer zone, will one player be allowed to pressure the player behind goal out of the goal circle while the other defender remains in the circle?

Answer: If the player they are pressuring has the ball and if the defender in the circle remains within a stick's length of that player with the ball, this would be legal.

8. **Question:** Can the on-ball defender who is legally in the goal circle play the ball in the circle? For example, she checks the ball out of the attacker's stick and then catches it.

Answer: This would be considered legal. In this instance the defensive team possession begins when the player catches the ball and at this point the defense may only have one player in the goal circle. Either the player with the ball or the goalkeeper must exit. If the goalkeeper exits, the defender who remains is considered the deputy.

9. **Question:** What happens in the case of the on-ball defender legally in the circle who checks the ball out of the attacker's stick and the ball drops to the ground inside the goal circle?

Answer: In this instance the defensive team possession begins when the ball is on the ground inside the circle. As in the situation above, either the goalie or the defender in the circle must exit the circle. Only one may remain to play the ball off the ground. In both instances, ball in the air and ball on the ground, the umpire will begin the 10-second count when the ball enters the circle.

10. **Question:** If the ball is on the ground in the goal circle, can a defender run into the goal circle and pick the ball up?

Answer: If the goalkeeper is in the circle already, the defender may not enter the circle. If there is no goalkeeper in the circle, one defender may enter as the deputy and play the ball.

NCAA MEMORANDUM

September 19, 2013

Page No. 6

Please direct all questions to Pat Dillon, secretary-rules editor, at pdillon656@aol.com.

CC/PD:bw